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BY

MISS HELEN MILLER GOULD

MCMX

FIGURE 1

ILLUSTRATIONS

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FIGURE 2

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THE MURCH COLLECTION OF EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES

IN the June number of the Bulletin announcement was made of the gift to the Museum by Miss Helen Miller Gould of the Murch Collection of Egyptian Antiquities. The Collection has since been completely classified and catalogued, and we can now, so far as is possible within the necessarily confined limits of the present article, give a somewhat detailed account of the objects of which it is composed.

The Collection was formed by Dr. Chauncey Murch, who for about twenty-five years directed the work of the American Presbyterian Mission at Luxor, and who thus had an unique opportunity of acquiring such material. Having a considerable knowledge of Egyptian antiquities and a keen discrimination, particularly for dated pieces, he was able to make full use of this opportunity, and in the course of time accumulated a most valuable collection of the smaller classes of material. A number of his scarabs were purchased in 1894 by the Art Institute of Chicago, and single objects were bought from time to time by the British Museum and other collectors, but the main part of the Collection has remained intact, and will now, through the generosity of Miss Gould, enrich the Egyptian galleries of our Museum.

In dealing with a collection of this size —there are in all 3,370 pieces—it is of course impossible to give anything like a detailed account of the various objects; indeed a bare list of those worth mentioning would more than exceed the space which can be allotted to the present article. We must confine ourselves as far as possible to a description of the classes of objects, and refer those who wish to make a closer acquaintance with the individual pieces to the room of Recent Accessions, where the whole collection has now been placed on exhibition for the present month.

The most important part of the collection historically, and that which Dr. Murch himself evidently took most pleasure in, consists of scarabs and the various other allied forms of seals. In the daily life of the Egyptian the seal played a very important part, and was used for a variety of objects. It was carried about on the person doubtless, as it is in the Egypt of to-day, as a means of identification, and to be affixed to documents as a sign manual; but in addition to this, at a time when locks and keys were non-existent, it provided the Egyptian with a means of safeguarding his property, and we find that wine jars and other vessels, bags, boxes, entrances to tombs, and even doors of storerooms and houses were all secured from theft or disturbance by means of the seal. In the administrative machinery of the country the use of the seal provided occupation for a great number of officials. The office of "Keeper of the Seal" was one of the highest that it was in the King's power to bestow; while among the lesser officials we find such titles as "Royal Sealers" (Heads of Departments), "Divine Sealers" (Superintendents of Temple Storehouses), "Assistants" of various degrees to the "Keeper of the Seal" and even "Instructors" in the art of sealing. Some of these titles, as we shall see, are represented in our present collection.

Egyptian seals are divided into two main classes. In the first the seal is cylindrical in shape, and the impression is made by *rolling* the cylinder over the prepared surface: in the second, which includes a variety of forms—scarabs, plaques, scaraboids, cowroids, animal-backed plaques and so on—a direct impression is made by *stamping*. The first, the cylinder seal, is

the more ancient. It occurs even in predynastic graves, commemorating indeed what is practically the Egyptian's first attempt to communicate his thoughts by means of written signs, remains in favor up to the time of the twelfth dynasty, and then rapidly disappears. The second class begins in the period immediately preceding the twelfth dynasty, and has been in use ever since.

The cylinder seal class is represented in the Murch Collection by forty-two examples. With two exceptions—one ivory[1] and one wood—they are all of stone, plain black or green steatite in the earlier examples, and glazed steatite, with one case of lapis lazuli, in the later. Seventeen of our examples belong to an interesting type which dates back to the very beginning of the dynastic period (Fig. 3, 4). They apparently contain the names of officials or private individuals, but up to the present no one has succeeded in satisfactorily deciphering them. The inscriptions on two of the others, which are slightly later in date, consist of animals and grotesque human figures (Fig. 3, 5). The remaining twenty-three bear royal names, and belong respectively to Menkaura (Fig. 3, 1) of the IV. dynasty (about 2900 B. C.), the builder of the third Gizeh pyramid, Userkaf (Fig. 3, 2) and User-n-ra (Fig. 3, 3) of the V. dynasty (about 2700 B. C.), Pepy of the VI. dynasty (about 2600 B. C.), Usertesen I., Amenemhat II., Usertesen II., Usertesen III., and Amenemhat III. of the XII. dynasty (2000–1788 B. C.), and to Sebekhetep III., Ra-mer-nefer and Her-tep-taui[2] of the XIII. dynasty (about 1700 B. C.). Royal cylinder seals are by no means common, and this is a particularly good selection. No other cylinder seals of User-n-ra or Ra-mer-nefer are known, while that of Her-tep-taui is the only object that bears his name in existence. There is also in the Collection a clay sealing of Sneferu of the IV. dynasty, giving the impression of a cylinder seal similar in type to the above.

Of the second class of seal—scarabs and the other types applied by stamping—the Murch Collection has upwards of 800 specimens of various materials, including glazed steatite, glazed pottery, gold, carnelian, amethyst, lapis lazuli, jasper, beryl, limestone, ivory, bronze, paste, and glass. These may be conveniently subdivided into—

A. Those bearing royal names (242 examples).
B. Those bearing names of officials and other private individuals (70 examples).
C. Seals without names, but inscribed with ornamental designs, names of gods, mottoes, and so on.

A. The royal seals are divided among the various dynasties as follows:—

Dyn. IV. Sneferu, Khufu (4 examples), Khafra, Menkaura (4).

Dyn. V. Unas (7).

These seals are not contemporary with the kings whose names they bear, but were issued in commemoration at a much later date, most of them in the XXVI. dynasty.

Dyn. XI (2160–2000 B. C.). Mentuhetep.[3]

Dyn. XII (2000–1788 B. C.). Usertesen III. (Fig. 4, 1), Amenemhat II.(2) Amenemhat III.

Dyn. XIII (1788– about 1680 B. C.). Sebekhetep I. (2), Neferhetep, Sebekhetep III (8. Fig. 4, 2).

Hyksos Kings (1680–1580 B. C.). Kha-neferu-ra, Maa-ab-ra, Aamu (Fig. 4, 3), Shesha (3), Ykeb, Khyan,[4] Apepa, Skha-n-ra.

Dyn. XVII (about 1600 B. C.). Aah-hetep (2).

Dyn. XVIII (1580–1350 B. C.). Aahmes I. (4), Aahmes Nefertari(6), Amenhetep I.(6. Fig.4, 4), Thothmes I. (3), Thothmes II.(3), Hatshepsut (9), Thothmes III. (45), Amenhetep II. (8), Thothmes IV. (4), Amen-

[1] This, with a few of the other seals in the collection, has been published by Newberry, Scarabs. London, 1906, Plate III., 14.

[2] Newberry, op. cit., vii., 2.

[3] Newberry, op. cit., p. 87.

[4] Id. xxii., 21.

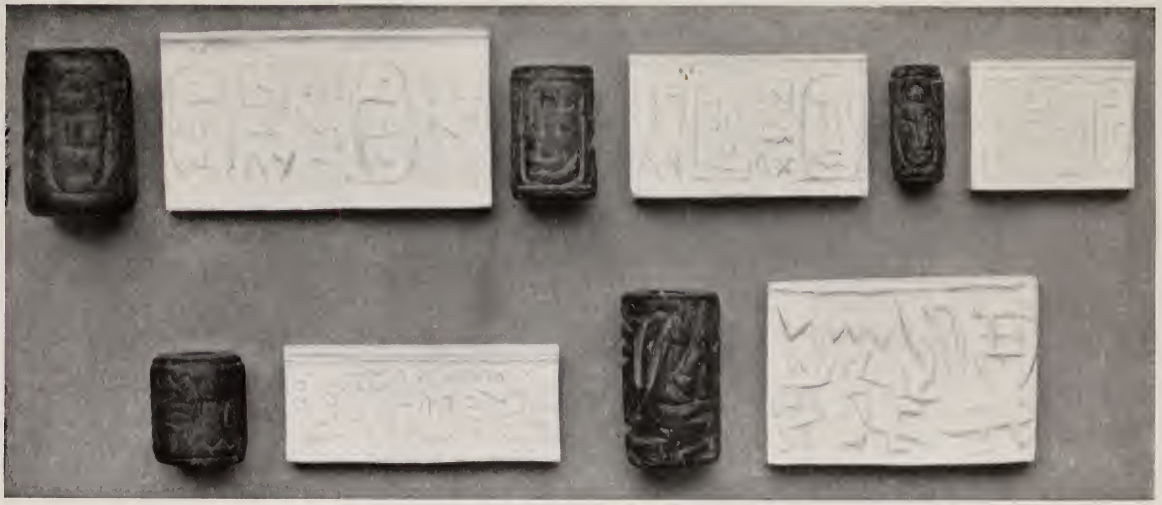

FIGURE 3

hetep III.(16), Tii (5), Akhenaten (7), Horemheb (2).

Dyn. XIX (1350–1205 B. C.). Rameses I., Seti I., Rameses II. (17. Fig. 4, 5), Merenptah.

Dyn. XX (1205–1090 B. C.). Rameses III., Rameses IV.

Dyn. XXI (1090–945 B. C.). Menkheper-ra (22: some of these may be in commemoration of Thothmes III.), Siamen.

Dyn. XXII (945–745 B. C.). Sheshonk I. (4. Fig. 4, 8), Osorkon II., Sheshonk IV.

Dyn. XXIV (718–712 B. C.). Bakenrenf.

Dyn. XXV (712–663 B. C.). Shabaka (5), Men-kheper-ra (14: some of these may be in commemoration of Thothmes III.) Taharka (Fig. 4, 9).

Dyn. XXVI (663–525 B. C.). Psamtek I. (2. Fig. 4, 10), Shapenapt, Nekau, Psamtek II. (3).

B. Of the class of private name seals there are in this collection only 70 examples, a very disproportionate number, one would think, as compared with the total of 242 royal seals. This is not a peculiarity of the collection, however, for the same ratio holds good in all collections, and in all excavations that produce scarabs. It should also be remarked that, with but few exceptions, the name is accompanied by a title which indicates that the owner of the seal was a person of some consequence. From these two facts we must surely infer that the right to use the name as a seal was confined to a privileged few, who gained this privilege, either by virtue of their office, or as a direct gift from the king. However that may be, it is at least true that the humbler individual was not in the habit of using a named seal. We may add that if he were debarred from advertising his name he had still the better of the bargain; for in the scarab-makers' shops there were seals with a variety of decorative designs—scroll pattern, hieroglyph, or animal—any one of which was from an artistic point of view more effective than a name could ever be, and from these he could select whichever pleased his fancy most.

Another point of interest in this class of seals is to be found in the fact that such a large proportion—in our collection more than half—of the official seal-bearing class belongs to one small period of the history, namely that which lies between the XII. and the XIV. dynasties. It is to be explained by the changes which time brought about in the administration of the country, the gradual, if somewhat irregular, evolution of a centralized from a decentralized form of government. Throughout the whole of Egyptian history, as indeed has been the case in all Oriental countries, the power of the nobles was a constant menace to the throne, and assassination commonly paved the way to a new dynasty. In the period immediately preceding the XII. dynasty and throughout the middle kingdom a regular feudal system prevailed, the government of the country being farmed out to high officials, who came to Court but rarely, and whose name-seals, in their own district at any rate, would ensure almost as much respect as that of the king. In a period such as this, the period too in which seals first came into common use, it is natural that the official class of named seal should be common. By the XIV. dynasty the inherent weakness of this decentralized system of administration had brought about its natural conclusion. The government had split up into a number of petty kingdoms, the chief of each asserting his right to the kingship of the whole, and the country passed for a time into the hands of a foreign invader. Then in the XVIII. dynasty came the expulsion of the foreign-

FIGURE 4

er, and the rise of a new and powerful line of kings, who, realizing the danger of a too powerful nobility, made a complete change in the form of government, absorbed into their own persons some of the old official titles and duties, and so restricted the powers and privileges of the remaining officials that they became, from semi-independent vassals, mere attendants on the king. One other point of interest in this connection must be noticed, and that is the great preponderance, in the latter part of the history, of the title, in some form or other, of "priest." With few exceptions the early seal titles are lay in character, whereas from the XVIII. dynasty onwards it is the exception to find a title that is not priestly. Here again the seals reflect the history. The throne had only escaped the danger of the nobles to fall into the hands of the "Church." Gradually all through the New Empire the power of the priests grew, till in the XXI. dynasty they gathered all the reins of government into their own hands, and established a line of priest-kings.

The seals are divided chronologically as follows:—

XII. dyn.

Senb-su-ma (2 examples). "Royal Sealer, Royal Companion, Keeper of the Seal." This is a well-known official, and his scarabs occur in several other collections.

Mery-ra. A ring in the collection also bears this official's name, and a scarab of his was found by Petrie at Illahun.

Tahutí-hetep. "'Hati' Prince, Superintendent of the Priests."

XII.–XIV. dyn.

Rera (Fig. 4, 12). "Superintendent of the Storehouse of Offerings."

Mu-nu-n-ab. "Mistress of the House" (chief wife). Of this lady one other scarab is known.

Shemses (Fig. 4, 11). "Attendant," son of Senb-nena.

Mesut. "Superintendent of the Interior, and of the North Land."

....senb. "Priest."

Nehesi. "Chief Scribe of the Keeper of the Seal." One other scarab known.

Sen-pu.[1] "Superintendent of the Storehouse of Offerings." Another of his scarabs was found at Illahun.

Ankh[2] (Fig. 4, 13). "Attendant of the ....."

Sebek-aa-senes.[3]

Senb-fy. "Overseer of the Lake."

Sehui. "Overseer of the Storehouse of the Palace."

Sebekhetep. "Uartu of the King's Table," son of the "Uartu of the King's Table" Mentuhetep. Several other scarabs of this official are known. The exact meaning of the title "Uartu" is doubtful.

Apu. "Guardian of the Bows."

Min. "High Priest (?) of Osiris."

Neb-re-sehui.[4] "Surveyor." Two other scarabs of his are known.

Hor-her. "Overseer of the Palace."

Nefer-hetep. "Judge, Instructor of the Scribes."

Senb-ui-su. "Overseer of the Palace."

Ptah-shent (?). "'Hati' Prince."

Auy.[5] "Governor of the City, Vezir."

S.... Sutekh.[6] "Royal Friend."

Betu(?). "Royal Scribe."

Zef.... "Sealer."

Khen-ser. "Superintendent of Interior."

Senb-sperui (?). "Mistress of the House" (chief wife).

(Name gone). "Superintendent of the Department of....."

[1] Newberry, op. cit., xxix., 2.
[2] Id. xv., 24. [3] Id. xii., 24.
[4] Id. xi., 4. [5] Id. xi., 2.
[6] Id. xiv., 17.

FIGURE 5

FIGURE 6

FIGURE 7

Ankhu. "Scribe of the Offerings."
Zedu(?). "'Uartu' of the King's Table."
Nefer-iu (2 examples). There is a third scarab of this official in the Berlin Museum.
Name doubtful (4 examples). These four seals belonged to the same person, but the name and title are indecipherable.
Y-ab.[2] "Mistress of the House" (chief wife).
Ptah-hetep. One other scarab of this official is known.
Amenemhat.
Nefer-khred. "'Hati' Prince."
Antef.
Antefa.
Ptah-neferui-ka.

XVIII. dyn. Men-kheper-ra-senb.[3] "Superintendent of the Workmen of Amen."
Pe-n-thebu.[4] "Steward of the Queen's House."
Thothmes (3 examples).
Amenhetep (4 examples).
Men-kheper-yker.
Tar. "Superintendent of the Palace, Royal Scribe."

XIX. dyn. Bak-n-khonsu.[5] "High Priest of Amen," son of the "Superintendent of the Recruits of the Temple of Amen," Amenemapt.
Paser. "Governor of the City, Vezir." Paser was an important official under Rameses II, and a number of his other seals are known.
Rameses. (2 examples).
Seti.

XX–XXII. dyn. Neb-ma-pek-tahuti. "Priest of Amen."
Zed-tahuti-auf-ankh.
Pimai. "'Erpati' Prince, 'Hati' Prince, Priest of Osiris." Two other seals of Pimai are known, one of them being in the Ward Collection, which was presented to our Museum by Mr. J. P. Morgan in 1905.

Nes.... "Superintendent of the Priests."
Name illegible. "Priest."

XXVI. dyn. Hory. "Priest."
Hor-tefi. "Priest."
Pedu-khonsu. Inscribed "May Khonsu grant protection to the Priest Pedu-khonsu."
Ankh-f-n-sekhmet. "Instructor of the Southern Tens."

C. Seals of the third class, those without names, are found in very large numbers, scarabs being among the commonest objects that excavations on sites subsequent to the twelfth dynasty produce. So common were they that it is impossible to believe that *all* scarabs were intended for use as seals. Some, moreover, were too tiny to be used for such a purpose, while others from the inscriptions they bear were evidently intended to be worn as amulets. It is impossible, however, to draw a dividing line between the seal and the amulet order of scarab, and they must be considered together. As we have said, the unnamed class of seal presents an extremely varied selection of decorative designs, no two of which are exactly alike. For convenience of classification they may be subdivided according to their motives into six groups:—

(a). Spiral and coil designs (Fig. 5, 1).
(b). Plant designs.
(c). Animal and human figures, hunting scenes, etc. (Fig. 5, 3).
(d). Names and figures of gods.
(e). Groups of hieroglyphs not meant to be translated, but arranged as a decorative design. (Fig. 5, 2).
(f). Mottoes and good wishes. (Fig. 5, 4)

In the first of these groups are to be found the most beautiful designs that occur in Egyptian seals. The motive is an early one, beginning in the twelfth dynasty, and dying out in the eighteenth. Coil designs are also used as border patterns on

[2] Newberry, op. cit. xliv, 14. [3] Id. xxix, 4.
[4] Id. xxix, 6. [5] Id. xxxv, 21.

FIGURE 8

named scarabs (Fig. 4, 13). Plant and flower designs are generally later, though a lotus is occasionally used in combination with a spiral pattern of the first class. Animal and human figures are common in the XII.–XVIII. dynasty period, but hunting

FIGURE 9

scenes are as a rule later. Names and figures of gods do not occur until the XVIII. dynasty: some at least of this class must have been used as amulets. Class (e) is very common in the XII.–XVIII. dynasty period. Some of the groupings of hieroglyphs are very elaborate, but the symmetrical nature of the arrangement makes it quite clear that they were not intended to be read, and there is no difficulty in distinguishing them from the last of our groups.

This last group, containing the mottoes and good wishes, has a more direct human interest than any of the others, and it is unfortunate that the inscriptions on so many of these seals have proved quite untranslatable. The mottoes that can be translated are of a stereotyped order, and betray a somewhat pharisaical self-satisfaction. Such phrases as "Khonsu is my protection," "My life is from Khonsu," "Loving truth," "Ra will provide," "Ra is behind me, I have no fear," "Protection and life come from the eye of Ra," "Pleasing to the eye of Ra" are common, while three of the seals in the collection cheered the hearts of their owners with the lyrical outburst, "How beautiful beyond every face is that of Ptah when he bestows strength." The "wish" seals were presents given by one person to another to mark an anniversary or some other special occasion. Two scarabs and a plaque in our collection bear the inscription "May Ra grant you a happy New Year." "May your name be established, may you have a son" (Fig. 5, 4), and "May your house flourish every day" are alternative New Year wishes that occur, and it is perhaps worth noting that the Egyptian of to-day uses almost exactly the same phrases in offering you his New Year's greetings. Other "wish" seals represented in the collection are "May you have a good journey to Thebes," "May your name be established in the House of Osiris," and "May Bast grant love."

In addition to the seals already described there are also in the collection a considerable number of signet rings. The earliest type is found in the XII. dynasty, and consists of a simple metal wire, usually gold, which is passed through a scarab, and is then twisted on itself to form a ring. This type persists into the XVIII. and XIX. dynasties (see example in Fig. 4), but from the XVIII. dynasty onwards the common

type is of metal throughout, gold or bronze, ring and bezel being made in a single piece. Glazed pottery rings of this later style are also very common in the XVIII. dynasty. Among the rings or parts of rings represented in the collection are included two of XII.–XIV. dynasty officials named Mery-ra and Nes-Khu; one of Thothmes III.; one

FIGURE 10

each of Amenhetep III. and Tii; eighteen of Akhenaten; one of Nefertiti; one of Ankh-kheperu-ra; one of Horemheb; two of Tutankhamen; one of Ankh-s-n-amen; one of Seti I.; three of Rameses II.; one of Merenptah; one of Rameses VI.(?); and one of a XXVI. dynasty official named Ptahhetep.

Two other classes of scarabs remain which are very large in size, and are quite distinct from the seal varieties. One consists of a very interesting series which were issued from time to time by Amenhetep III. to commemorate certain events in his reign. Four sets of scarabs are known in this series, and two of them are represented in the Murch Collection. The first (Fig. 8, 2), of which about 40 examples are known, relates the lion-hunting exploits of the King, who describes how between the first and the tenth years of his reign he "shot with his own bow 102 lions, fierce ones"; while the second (Fig. 8, 1) commemorates the celebration of his marriage with Queen Tii.

To the remaining group of non-seal scarabs belong those which are known by the name of "heart scarabs." These were placed inside the wrappings upon the breasts of mummies, and their use as amu-

lets is indicated by the fact that upon the base of each example is inscribed in more or less complete form the 30th chapter of the "Book of the Dead", the chapter of not allowing to be rejected the heart of the deceased in the underworld." In the papyrus copies of the "Book of the Dead" the vignette which accompanies this chapter represents the deceased in the scales, being weighed against his own heart by Thoth in the presence of Osiris. In the Murch Collection there are 20 of these heart scarabs, dating from the XVIII. to the XXVI. dynasties. Many of them are so carelessly inscribed that it is difficult to decipher the name, while in others the space intended for the name has never been filled up, showing that such scarabs were kept in stock by the undertakers, and could be got ready for use at a moment's notice simply by filling in the name of the deceased.

The remaining classes of material in the collection must be treated more briefly. In the first place, in addition to the named seals and scarabs, there are a considerable number of other objects of various kinds which are inscribed with the names of kings or notables. For convenience of reference these are arranged in chronological order in the subjoined table—

XII. dyn. Forehead pendant of Amenemhat III.

XIII. dyn. Incomplete plaque giving name Ra-kha-ka(?), and Horus name Neb-semtu. The reading is not quite certain, but we know from Manetho that there was a king of this name in the XIII. dynasty, and the color of the glaze agrees well with that dating. The Horus name is otherwise unknown.

XVIII. dyn. Named objects of this dynasty are very common. Here we have "sacred eye" amulets of Amenhetep I., Thothmes III., Amenhetep II., Thothmes IV., Amenhetep III. and Akhenaten; beads and pendants of Amenhetep I., Hatshepsut, Amenhetep III., his daughter Hent-taui, and Akhenaten; seal moulds of Akhenaten, his wife Nefertiti, Tutankhamen and Horemheb; and lastly, what is perhaps the most valuable piece in the collection, a "kohl"-tube, inscribed with the names of Amenhetep III. and his queen, of that rich deep blue which is so characteristic of his reign (Fig. 9).

XIX. dyn. Three wooden clamps, a pendant and an incomplete ushabti of Seti I.; an object of unknown use in red granite, three pendants, a glass heart amulet, two beads and a seal mould of Rameses II.; three incomplete ushabtis, one complete tile and five tile fragments from foundation deposits; and a pendant of Seti II. To this dynasty also in all probability belongs a limestone canopic jar, dedicated to a princess, hitherto unknown, named Aniy.

XXI. dyn. A bead of Herhor; three ushabtis of Hent-taui, the wife of Piankh; three ushabtis of Panezem I. (Fig. 10, upper row); an ushabti of Ramaka, wife of Panezem I.; and four ushabtis and an amulet of Zed-khonsu-aufankh, son of Panezem II. These eleven ushabti, or servant, figures must have come from the great find of royal mummies at Deir el Bahari in 1881. Others from the same find were purchased by our museum from the Egyptian Government in 1886, and the two sets combined will now give us a fairly complete selection of the ushabtis of these XXI. dynasty priest kings and their families. There are also in the Murch Collection ushabtis of six inferior priests of the same period (Fig. 10, lower row).

XXIII. dyn. Glazed limestone fragment, giving both cartouches of Amenrud. This is a very rare king, the only other museum objects of his that are known being a crystal vase in the Louvre, and a wooden fragment in Berlin.

XXV. dyn. Five beads and a plaque of Shabaka; a large bronze stamp

FIGURE 11

FIGURE 12

of Shabatoka; and a fragment of an alabaster jar with the name of Queen Amenardus.

XXVI. dyn. Five pendants, an ivory forehead pendant, a lapis lazuli "sacred eye" amulet, and an incomplete "menat" pendant of Psamtek I.; four tiles from a foundation deposit of Shapenapt, wife of Psamtek I.; a bead of Psamtek II.; a seal mold and two "menat" pendants of Nekau; a pendant, two incomplete "menat" pendants, and three pieces of black granite with cartouches of Haa-ab-ra; a bead, and three pieces of sistrum handles of Aahmes-sa-neith.

To this period also belong a number of fine ushabti figures, notably four of a certain "Admiral of the Fleet" named Pa-n-hebu.

XXX. dyn. Bead of Nekht-neb-f.

Coming down to later times we have a seal impression of Arsinoe, wife of Ptolemy II.; a bronze stamp of Hadrian; gold coins of Vespasian, Valentinian, Valens, Heraclius, Constantine and Justinian II.; silver coins of Alexander the Great, Ptolemy I., Ptolemy IX., Ptolemy X., Ptolemy XI., Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian and Aelius, Verus, and bronze or copper coins of Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Probus, Licinius and Constantine. The majority of these coins were struck at the Alexandrian mint, but some are from the mints of Constantinople, Citium and Salamis. In addition there are a gold coin of one of the Abbaside Khalifs, a coin of Sala ed Din, and a Venetian coin of the XV. century.

FIGURE 13

Another class of objects in which the Murch Collection is well represented is that of amulets. Amulets in one form or another are the most persistent of all classes of Egyptian material, nor, in dealing with a people in whose religion magic played such a prominent part, is that at all to be wondered at. Indeed so deeply were the Egyptians imbued with the idea of fulfilling their material or spiritual wants, and of averting danger or disaster by means of

FIGURE 14

magical figures and formulas, that it would almost be true to say that *all* their tomb furnishing and decorations were amuletic in origin. For example, each Canopic jar was presided over by a deity whose province it was to protect from destruction the portion of the body contained in it; ushabtis were figures which a magic formula would quicken to life in the next world to work for their owners; boats, weapons, models of furniture, and all the other necessities of this life were placed in the tomb in anticipation of a want which their owner was sure to feel in the next; food offerings, or later sculptured representations of food offerings which a knowledge of magic would make equally available, were provided for the same reason; pictured scenes, representing the dangers which threatened the deceased in his passage into the next world, together with the correct magic formulas by which they might be averted, were inscribed on papyrus or tomb wall to prompt the forgetful or ignorant; in a word, everything in the tomb was designed to meet some particular special need in the new form of life, and in that sense were almost as much amuletic in their nature as the tiny figures or charms which are usually associated with the term amulet. Nor was it only in their pious care for the dead that the Egyptians made use of amulets. To an almost equal extent their everyday existence was tinged with magic, and the most ordinary affairs of life were regulated by superstition. Evil spirits were exorcised, and beneficent ones cajoled into granting favors, by the use of spells and magic names; votive offerings were placed in temples to ensure to their donors the protection of the deity whose name they bore; lucky and unlucky days were carefully watched out for; charms

FIGURE 15

were carried or hung up in the house to avert special dangers such as snake-bite or death from drowning; while the medical recipes preserved remind one forcibly of the contents of the witches' caldron in Macbeth. Small wonder then if the sand of Egypt is full of amulets.

They occur—we are using the term "amulet" now in its more restricted sense—in Egyptian graves of every period, and, except in certain well-defined cases, are of course extremely difficult to date with any close degree of accuracy. An examination of a large collection such as this, however, brings out very clearly the great difference that exists between the earlier and the later amulets, and the fact that it is possible to draw a fairly sharp dividing line between those of the two periods. This line of division is ruled for us by the dark period of foreign domination which lay between the XII. and the XVIII. dynasties; and though on the one side or the other a latitude of four or five dynasties must frequently be allowed, there is very rarely a question as to which side of the line any given amulet belongs. In the earlier period the types of amulets were comparatively few, and consisted almost entirely of animals or heads of animals, human hands, legs, and faces also occurring. They differ from the later types in that they were very small, and were all made of precious or semi-precious materials, carnelian, beryl, amethyst, and gold being most sought after. They were worn commonly on necklaces, and hence must have an ornamental as well as a magical value. With the advent of the XVIII. dynasty came a great change, due in part no doubt to the growing influence of the Theban priests of Amen; an influence which was itself a direct result of the change that was coming over the general character of the religion of the country. Even in its earlier stages the religion of Egypt was by no means a simple or easy one to comprehend: in later times, owing to the fact that the Egyptian adopted with enthusiasm any new god he might hear of, or any new point of doctrine that might happen to occur to him, and yet never by any chance gave up any of the old ones, it arrived at a state of confusion which defies description. In its later developments at least three quite distinct and entirely contradictory doctrines with regard to the future state were involved, and the Egyptian with fine impartiality believed them all. It will readily be understood then that the character of amulets would change, and their scope be enlarged. Many of the old amulets, such as the "foot" and "hand," "hippopotamus head" and "leopard head," disappeared altogether. Others in animal form persisted, but were worn, not as mere animals any more, but as representatives of the gods whose sacred animals they were. Little figures of the gods themselves came into use, and became increasingly popular, and a number of other forms, much more involved and incomprehensible in their symbolism, such as the "girdle tie," supposedly representative of the blood of Isis, were added, and became regular parts of the equipment of the mummy. In the Murch Collection there are 24 varieties of amulets belonging to the early class, and 74 to the late; and a further illustration of the great increase in the amulet's sphere of influence is given us by a late document, which states that no less than 104 varieties were considered essential to the proper furnishing of the mummy.

It is of course impossible in dealing with a collection of amulets which numbers several hundred examples to attempt to describe the individual pieces. One group, however, calls for special mention. It consists of a set of seven deities, in wood; Isis with outstretched protecting wings, Horus, Anubis supporting a "dad" sign, Anubis with bow and arrow, Min, Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, and an ichneumon holding a sacred eye. As may be seen in the accompanying illustration (Fig. 11) the figures are exquisitely modeled, the details on some of them being worked out with such care and precision that to be properly appreciated they must be seen under a magnifying glass. For the rest we may single out a frog in lapis lazuli with gold eyes, a gold figure of Isis (Fig. 19), a glazed pottery figure of Bast, and a large figure of Taurt in glazed frit (Vignette on cover).

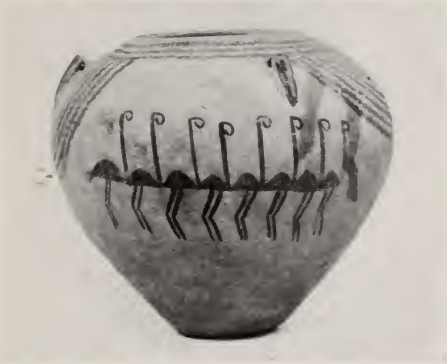

FIGURE 16

Votive figures are so akin to amulets in their purpose that it would almost be justifiable to include them under one heading. Moreover, in Egypt at any rate it is impossible to distinguish between the votive and the propitiatory type of offering, between the gift, that is to say, which expressed thanks for past favors and that which anticipated benefits to come. In both cases the usual form that the offering took was a figure, or number of figures, of some god or of his sacred animal; the figures being either placed within the temple itself, or buried in the ground within its precincts. Bronze seems to have been the favorite medium, and statuettes of this material are extremely common. Osiris naturally held chief place in popular esteem, but practically all the gods are represented, and in late times the plan was even adopted of combining the distinguishing features of two or three gods in a single figure, thereby securing their united protection in a very economical way. An example of this occurs in the Murch Collection, a seated ithyphallic figure having the flail of Min, the ram horns of Amen, and the back of a bird. Among other bronze votive figures in the collection there are statuettes of Osiris, Imhetep, Harpocrates, the Apis bull (Fig. 13), and the cat of Bast. Figures of this kind are also common in stone and other materials: two of lapis lazuli are shown in Fig. 12, representing the goddess Maat and the hawk of Horus.

Objects in glass are also well represented in the collection. In Fig. 14 is shown a group of five vases of the type that until quite recently has always gone by the name of Phœnician. They have been found in many quarters of the Mediterranean, but, as Kisa[1] has pointed out, there can be no question that their original home was in Egypt, and that if any were manufactured abroad they were but imitations of Egyptian originals. In the first place, it was in Egypt that glass was invented, and in the eighteenth dynasty (about 1500 B. C.), some eight or nine hundred years before the date of the so-called Phœnician ware, glass-making was a flourishing trade, and exceedingly beautiful vases were being manufactured. These early vases, moreover, were so similar in shape and technique to the later ones that in many cases it is exceedingly difficult to distinguish be-

FIGURE 17

[1] Kisa, Das Glas im Altertume. Leipzig, 1908. Vol. I p. 95.

tween them. If then we grant that the later vases were foreign, we have to make ourselves believe that a somewhat peculiar type, both in shape and technique, completely died out in one country, and that precisely the same type was reintroduced into it after a lapse of time by another. As a matter of fact, however, our Egyptian

Of the five vases in the photograph No. 5 dates to about the thirteenth century B. C., 4, 3 and 1 to the eighth or seventh, while the second is possibly early Ptolemaic. They were hand molded on a sand core, colored sticks of glass were wound round and pressed in, and the pattern was formed by dragging the surface of the vase while

FIGURE 18

expedition of the Metropolitan Museum has found in its work clear proof that the ware did not by any means die out in Egypt. In a town site at Lisht, some four hundred years later in date than the XVIII. dynasty, definite evidence was found of the manufacture on a large scale of this very type of glass. We know, moreover, that Egypt at this later period was doing a considerable trade with neighboring countries, that the early historians all speak with admiration of the glass of Egypt, that the Alexandrian glass-workers were famed for their handiwork, and that under the Emperors glass, in one form or another, formed part of the annual tribute to Rome. Everything points to the fact that in ancient times Egypt was the great center of the glass-making trade, and it is really difficult to see on what grounds the claim of Phœnician origin for this type of vase has been based.

still soft. Blown glass was a discovery of considerably later date.

To Egypt also is due the invention of mosaic glass so-called, in which a number of tiny rods of various colors were assembled to form a pattern, and then lightly fused into a single mass, the pattern thus running lengthwise throughout the whole piece. Many of these mosaic designs were on much too minute a scale to have been made in their present size. In Fig. 15, for example, we have a case in point, the details of the frog's wings and of the bird's tail being so delicate that they can hardly be seen without the aid of a magnifying glass. In order to attain this result the original design was made on a very much larger scale. The fused rod was then drawn out evenly, and, as a natural consequence, the thickness of the rod being lessened in proportion to the increase in its

length, the design itself was correspondingly reduced in size. The rod thus drawn out to the required length was cut into thin slices, each slice exactly reproducing the original design. The slices, if intended for inlay, were then backed with common glass and were ready for use. In addition to a large number of these slices, square, round and oblong, in the Murch Collection there are fortunately preserved for us two of these rods, drawn out ready to be sliced. There are also pieces of millefiori vases, small grotesque faces and animal heads, and several colorless vases of blown glass all of the Roman period.

Beads of various kinds form another important part of the Collection, and these are particularly welcome, as our Museum has hitherto been but poorly represented in this class of material. Of glass beads there is a very large assortment—opaque beads of various colors of the XVIII.–XX. dynasty period, "eyed" beads of the later period up to the Ptolemaic, and a large collection of beads of the Roman period, including mosaic, millefiori, gilt, silvered, and "marbled." The most interesting of the glass beads are the imitations of various kinds of stone—amethyst, lapis lazuli, garnet, beryl, agate, onyx and hematite being all thus anciently counterfeited—in some cases so cleverly that it is almost impossible to distinguish the false from the real. Among the beads of other materials there are some fine amethyst, garnet, and hematite necklaces of the XII. dynasty, and carnelian and glazed pottery strings of various periods, all the way from predynastic to Coptic.

In addition to the material already described, which fell naturally into groups, there still remains a large miscellany of objects which should not be passed over in silence. It will be easiest perhaps to divide them into chronological periods, a plan which will have the additional advantage of showing to some extent the wide scope of the collection. Thus, of the predynastic period we have a very unusual decorated pottery box, and seven decorated pottery vases (Fig. 16); seven stone vases, two of which are of considerable size; several finely worked flint implements, and a pair of the flint bracelets that occur so rarely; an ivory hair comb; and a number of stone maceheads, playing marbles, and other small objects. Somewhat later in date, and belonging to the period of the earliest dynasties, there are three more flint knives, and some small stone vases. To the VI.–XI. dynasty period belong another series of small stone vases. The XII. dynasty is represented by several interesting objects. First in importance comes the obsidian statuette head in Fig. 17. This is a charming and delicate piece of work, and affords a very good example of the control which the Egyptians had over this unresponsive medium. There are also three wooden dolls; a delightful vase of blue marble, the sides of which are supported by a pair of monkeys in high relief; and a number of "kohl" pots and other alabaster vases. Among other XVIII. dynasty objects occur —the head of a granite statue; the head of an alabaster statuette of a king (Fig. 18); a gold earring with cloisonné inlay of lapis lazuli (Fig. 19); an alabaster pestle and mortar; two alabaster tubular vases; three bronze axe-heads; a fine bronze mirror, with handle in the form of an erect female figure; and a number of glazed pottery pendants and pieces of inlay which must have come from the palace of Akhenaten at Tell el Amarna. Three of the four pendants shown in Fig. 20 are inscribed with Akhenaten's motto "Living in the Truth." Among the objects of a later dynastic time we may notice three openwork rings of glazed pottery (Fig. 1); a statuette head in basalt, of very good workmanship; and a glazed pottery flask of the kind known as "New Year" flasks, it being the custom for the master of a house to receive one or more as a gift from his children or dependents on New Year's Day. This example has "May Ra grant a happy New Year to their lord" on one shoulder, and on the other "May Isis grant a happy New Year." To the Ptolemaic period belong a number of wooden "mummy labels" or tags, which were fastened to mummies for purposes of identification; a very necessary precaution, for at this period it was common among the poorer classes to bury a number of people together in one common

FIGURE 19

FIGURE 20

FIGURE 21

tomb. The labels are inscribed, some in demotic characters, some in Greek, and some in both. To the end of the Ptolemaic and earlier part of the Roman periods belong also—an interesting little collection of jewelry, consisting of gold chains, earrings and finger-rings, a selection of which is shown in Fig. 21; a large variety of gems, classical and gnostic; and a number of playing marbles. Of the Coptic period we have a number of ostraca; a large wool-carding comb of wood, and a wooden stamp; and a number of crosses of bronze, glass, wood and mother-of-pearl. Last of all, to the early part of the Arab domination must be assigned a piece of embroidery and a number of glass bracelets.

ARTHUR C. MACE.

FIGURE 22

LE MINUZIE FANNO LA PERFEZZIONE MA LA PERFEZZIONE NON È UNA MINUZIA
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